



Flathead County Emergency Medical Services Administrative Board

Minutes September 21, 2009

Members present: Velinda Stephens, Wayne Miller, Bob Kun, Myrt Webb, Jason Spring

Also present: Joe Brenneman, Mark Peck, Cindy Mullaney, Dan Diehl, Amanda Lindgren, Joe Russell, Rob Bates, and Chris Long

Welcome and Introductions

Commissioner Joe Brenneman opened the meeting at 1:10 p.m. Self introductions were made. Commissioner Brenneman indicated out that he will chair the meeting until a Chair and Vice Chair are elected. He then provided a brief history of funding for the EMS program and identified board responsibilities.

Approximately 6-7 years ago, three mills have been were levied for the EMS program for the provision of ambulance services to the citizens of Flathead County. Originally the program was set up under the Health Department. Funding was generally distributed based on population. Earlier this year a study ~~to~~ study group was established to review existing practices and to determine what, if any, changes needed to be made. Recommendations include, but are not limited to, moving EMS under the Office of Emergency Services and developing a new funding distribution mechanism. Commissioner Brenneman pointed out that moving EMS under OES is a natural progression and no criticism of any person or department is implied.

Board Responsibilities

Commissioner Brenneman pointed out that the most valuable commodity of the program is the volunteer who gives of his or her time to provide service. With that in mind, the responsibilities of the Board include 1) providing training, 2) program oversight and 3) medical direction. The Board functions as an administrative board under Commissioner review, meaning that the Commissioners retain responsibility for final decisions including funding budgets.

Approval of Agenda

There being no objection, the agenda will stand. Commissioner Brenneman pointed out that no action can be taken on a given issue unless it has been duly noted as an agenda item.

Election of Officers

Nominations were opened for Chair of the Board, Mr. Spring nominated Wayne Miller. Nominations closed. Mr. Spring moved and Mr. Webb seconded a motion to elect Dr. Miller as Chair. Motion unanimously approved.

Nominations for Vice Chair were opened. Mr. Spring nominated Myrt Webb for the position of Vice Chair. Nominations closed. Mr. Spring moved and Dr. Miller seconded a motion to elect Mr. Webb as Vice Chair. Motion unanimously approved.

Bylaws

Mark Peck distributed a copy of the 911 Board Bylaws for use as a template. Dr. Miller will distribute a copy of the Health Board bylaws prior to the next meeting. Discussion was held about the frequency of meetings and the designation of alternates. These issues will be addressed in the bylaws. The Commissioners are responsible for final approval of bylaws.

Program Status

Mark Peck noted that a summary of the study group report was distributed with the minutes. He indicated that the group did a remarkable job and that this Board is modeled after the group's recommendation. He reported that the three most critical program issues are: 1) the contract with the medical director, 2) hiring of the EMS Manager, and 3) FY2010 budget. The contract with Dr. Bates ends September 30, 2009 so there is some urgency to this issue. Three applications were received for the EMS Manager position and one has subsequently withdrawn. Initial decisions on the budget include how to handle the transition in the short term and completion of a business analysis for the long term. There is a need to make decisions based on the cost of providing service but there is currently no good information on those costs. There is a need to change business operations and strategically plan for development. A determination needs to be made on how funding will be distributed. In the past, it has been based on population, not level of service.

Budget

EMS has two accounts: 2272 – 1 mill EMS program and 2273 – 2 mill special EMS program. There is a combined cash balance of \$180,121 from FY09. One mill in Flathead County generates \$223,904 in income. A cash reserve of 20% must be maintained but may not exceed 30%. Two budget handouts were discussed. At the present time, the Commissioners have authorized expenditures, but the FY2010 budget has not yet been approved. Protested taxes could reduce anticipated revenue.

Medical Director Contract

The current contract with Dr. Bates expires September 30th. The content of the contract needs discussion and revision. There will be a need to extend the contract for 30 days in order to make needed changes.

EMS Manager Position

The position description was distributed. Mark will provide the quality handbook to all Board members. The EMS manager will work for OES. This position will be responsible for day to day business and unit coordination. The Medical Director works for the Board. The Board and Medical Director will provide oversight for management, budgets, protocols etc. There will need to be close coordination between the EMS Manager, Medical Director, OES Director and the Board. The hiring panel will consist of the Medical Director, field personnel, a Board member (Dr. Miller), and OES.

Paramedic Refresher Training

The training needs to occur prior to the end of the year in order to get the paperwork in to the National Registry on time. Two proposals were presented: one from Jim Neal and another from Chris Long. Discussion followed regarding the pros and cons of class length, daytime vs. evening vs. weekend classes and impacts on volunteer vs. paid personnel. Mr. Spring made a motion to utilize Jim Neal for 3 sessions

and Chris Long for a 4th session for a cost of approximately \$15,000. This solution provides the flexibility for offer classes during work shifts for paid personnel and on Saturdays for volunteers. Ms. Stevens seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

Board Member Comments

Mr. Webb commented that in order to plan effectively, the Board will need to know who is providing services, areas covered, ALS or BLS, cost of service, hours of operation, number of runs etc. The information is currently being compiled and should be available by the next meeting.

When asked about opposition to the business approach, Mark indicated there is no major opposition and guarded support.

Dr. Bates commented that he is a non-voting member of the Board. He agrees getting the EMS Manager hired is a priority. Work on reorganizing the system is also very important. He has been working with a group developing authority for the Board and Medical Director to enforce policies and protocols and deny funding an access to dispatch services.

Citizen Comments

None

Miscellaneous

Please let Dr. Miller know of any agenda items for the next meeting which is tentatively scheduled for Monday, October 19th at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Spring moved and Mr. Webb seconded a motion to adjourn at 3:30 p.m. Motion unanimously approved.

Task List

Task	Assigned To	Deadline
Distribute a copy of the Health Board bylaws	Dr. Miller	Prior to 10/19
Distribute quality handbook	Mark Peck	
Compile information on service providers, coverage areas, ALS vs BLS, cost of service, hours of operation, number of runs	Amanda Lindgren / Mark Peck	Prior to 10/19